



Australian Government

Community
Grants Hub
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Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 – National Disability Conference Initiative 2023–24

Feedback for applicants

The Department of Social Services has provided the following General Feedback for applicants of the *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 – National Disability Conference Initiative 2023–24* grant opportunity.

Overview

The National Disability Conference Initiative (NDCI) is a program delivered by the Australian Government as a commitment under *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031* (ADS), supporting the vision of the ADS for an inclusive Australian society that ensures people with disability can fulfil their potential, as equal members of the community.

The NDCI is part of the department's Disability and Carers Support component, under Outcome 3.1 Disability and Carers. This Outcome supports people with disabilities and carers to actively participate in community and economic life.

This grant opportunity provides grants to conference organisers to assist people with disability participate in nationally-focused, disability-related, conferences held in Australia. Grants will support eligible conference organisers to provide accessibility measures and travel costs that will maximise the inclusion and participation of people with disability at their conference.

The outcomes of the NDCI that are expected to be achieved by this grant funding round are:

- Greater participation and inclusion of people with disability at nationally-focused, disability-related conferences held in Australia.
- Greater awareness of *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031* launched on 3 December 2021.

Up to \$315,000 (GST exclusive) over one year was advised in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines as being available for this grant opportunity, starting from 1 July 2023 and ceasing 30 June 2024.

The application period opened on 14 March 2023 and closed on 27 April 2023. Applicants could apply for up to a maximum of \$10,000 (GST exclusive) in funding over the funding period. Successful organisations may have received less funding than requested.

This feedback is provided to help grant applicants understand what made a strong application for this grant round, and how to strengthen future applications.

Selection Process

The Community Grants Hub undertook the screening for organisation eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. This information was provided to the Department of Social Services, which provided the final decision on whether an application did not meet the eligibility and/or compliance criteria. The Community Grants Hub undertook the preliminary assessment of all eligible and compliant applications using an open competitive selection process.

All eligible and compliant applications were then assessed against the 3 equally weighted assessment criteria.

Following preliminary assessment, all assessed applications were referred to the Department of Social Services for consideration by a Selection Advisory Panel (the Panel). The Panel comprised officers with a mix of relevant policy, program and delivery expertise from the Department of Social Services.

A total of 61 applications were assessed, making the selection of successful grant recipients competitive.

The Panel recommended applicants that met the eligibility criteria based on the strength of their responses to the selection criteria and their ability to meet the grant requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines. Specifically, the Panel recommended applicants that best:

- aligned their activities with the objectives of the grant
- represented value for money
- demonstrated experience and expertise to administer the grant funding.

Where applications did not meet the requirements outlined in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines, applicants were notified of the outcome in writing.

Selection Results

Assessment of applications was in accordance with the procedure detailed in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines and outlined in the selection process above.

Of 61 applications, the Panel recommended 39 organisations to the delegate for funding. The delegate made the final decision to approve the grant, including the grant funding amount to be awarded.

The following feedback outlines how individual responses to specific assessment criteria could have been strengthened.



Criterion 1 - National disability focus

Strength	Example
<p>Strong applications clearly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ demonstrated how the conference aligned with one or more of the outcome areas of <i>Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031</i>▪ described the focus of the conference and what the expected outcomes are▪ demonstrated how the conference has a national focus.	<p>Strong responses clearly described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How the conference supports the aims of <i>Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031</i> (ADS) by referencing specific outcome areas of the ADS and explaining how the conference would promote those outcome areas.▪ The benefits the conference will provide to the target group – for example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– provide an opportunity for people with disability to obtain knowledge of, and to be able to share, the latest information/research relevant to the target group– provide an opportunity for people with disability to contribute to policy development– connect people with disability sharing a similar experience, build relationships, and so on– live streaming conference content to be available to people with disability unable to attend in person.▪ How the conference meets the national, disability focus outlined in section 5.1 <i>Eligible grant activities</i> – for example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– demonstrating how the majority of the conference schedule focuses on national issues– a strategy to ensure people with disability from around Australia have the opportunity to participate– demonstrating how at least half of the schedule focuses on people with disability and issues affecting the lifetime wellbeing and social participation of people with disability.



Criterion 2 - Maximising the inclusion and participation of people with disability

Strength	Example
<p>When addressing this criterion strong applicants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ demonstrate how the grant funding will be used to maximise the inclusion and participation of people with disability at the conference▪ if the NDCI funds are intended for accessibility measures that organisations would be expected to provide as part of their obligations under the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> (Cth), briefly demonstrate why such adjustments would cause major difficulties or excessive costs for your organisation (refer to section 5.1 Eligible grant activities)▪ where possible outline the potential number of people with disability and their expected role (participant, presenter etc.) and/or carers expected to directly benefit from the grant funding and how they will benefit▪ outline the expected percentage of delegates to the conference that will be people with disability▪ submit a budget (using the provided template) as an attachment to your application form outlining the expenditure items the grant money will be used for.	<p>Strong responses clearly described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Specific ways grant funds will be used for eligible items/activities for example: assist people with disability and their carers with costs associated with travel, accommodation, live captioning, accessible materials, technology enhancements so people with disability can participate remotely.▪ Where funding was sought for accessibility measures that organisations would be expected to provide as part of their obligations under the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> (Cth), why these adjustments would be difficult for the organisation to fund without the support of the grant funding, for example: the limited funds available within the organisation mean that the accessibility measures could not be funded without the grant funding.▪ The number of people with disability and carers expected to attend the conference and how the grant funding would be applied to supporting their inclusion and participation, for example: how many delegates/presenters with disability (and carers) would have travel costs supported or subsidised, the number of expected attendees expected to benefit from the provision of Auslan interpreting.▪ The expected number of delegates and the percentage expected to be people with disability, including with reference to the number of attendees at prior conferences where possible.



Strength	Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The expected costs of each item/activity for which the grant funding will be used, in the mandatory budget template provided. With the total of the budget matching the total grant funding sought in the application.

Criterion 3 - Organisation capacity and capability

Strength	Example
<p>When addressing this criterion strong applicants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ demonstrate your organisation’s capacity and capability to administer the grant▪ include examples of any previous grants, conferences or similar projects your organisation has successfully undertaken▪ demonstrate the relevant experience, skills and qualifications of members of your organisation in delivering the project.	<p>Strong responses clearly described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The organisation’s experience in managing grants, programs or similar conferences by detailing recent examples of the type of activities delivered and how the contractual requirements were successfully handled.▪ Relevant skills and qualifications of individuals who have a key role in organising the conference.

Individual feedback

Individual feedback will not be provided for this grant opportunity.